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(HABITAT II)

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Draft statement of principles
and global plan of action

DRAFT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS AND GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION:

THE HABITAT AGENDA

Report of the Secretary-General of the Conference

SUMMARY

1. In operative paragraph 2 (b) of its resolution 47/180, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided that the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) shall have as an objective the adoption of a general statement of principles and commitments and the formulation of a related global plan of action suitable for guiding national and international efforts through the first two decades of the next century.

2. Subsequently, and as directed by the Preparatory Committee at its first substantive session, the Secretary-General of the Conference submitted to the second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee a draft Statement of Principles and Commitments and Global Plan of Action. After its consideration of the document, the Preparatory Committee decided, in its Decision II/8, to continue with the review and drafting of the Statement of Principles and Commitments and Global Plan of Action during the intersessional period in an open-ended informal drafting group.

3. Accordingly, the open-ended Informal Drafting Group held its first intersessional meeting at the United Nations Office at Nairobi from 17 to 21 July 1995 to continue with the review and drafting of the document. Pursuant to sub-paragraph (b) of Decision II/8 of the Preparatory Committee, the draft which was prepared by the Informal Drafting Group at this session was circulated to all Member States for comments.

4. At the invitation of the Government of France, the second intersessional meeting of the Informal Drafting Group was held in Paris from 9 to 13 October 1995 during which the draft was further reviewed in the light of comments which had been received from governments, United Nations bodies, inter-governmental organizations and other contributors. The revised draft which is for the time being entitled "The Habitat Agenda" is annexed hereto for the consideration of the Preparatory Committee.

5. The reports of the Informal Drafting Group at its first and second sessions are also before the Preparatory Committee as Annex I and Annex II of document A/CONF.165/PC.3/4/Add.1.

THE HABITAT AGENDA

I. PREAMBLE

1. As we enter the twenty-first century, our vision of a world of stability and peace must be reinvigorated. There is a sense of great opportunity and hope that a new world can be built in which social and economic progress, environmental protection and better standards of living can be realized through global solidarity and cooperation. Nowhere can these goals be better demonstrated than through the quality of living conditions in our settlements.

2. The purpose of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) is to address two themes of global importance: "Adequate shelter for all" and "Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world". Achieving adequate shelter for all is central to the well-being of more than one billion people without decent living conditions. Sustainable development is critical for the social, economic and environmental viability of human settlements.

3. Recognizing the global nature of these issues, the international community, in convening Habitat II, has decided that a concerted global approach could greatly enhance progress toward achieving these goals. The cross-national and global impacts of unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and environmental, economic and social deficiencies are clearly visible. The sooner nations join their efforts for comprehensive, bold and innovative shelter and human settlements policies, the better the prospects will be for the safety, the health and the well-being of their citizens, and the brighter the outlook will be for a turn-around in the global environmental and social crisis.

4. Having considered the experience since the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements held in Vancouver in 1976, Habitat II has taken up the messages from relevant recent world conferences and developed them into an agenda for human settlements, the Habitat Agenda. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - Earth Summit - held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 produced Agenda 21, which highlighted specific human settlements issues which must be dealt with. Each of the succeeding conferences: World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Bridgetown, 1994), World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction (Yokohama, 1994), International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) also addressed important sustainable development issues for which successful implementation requires action at the local, national and international levels and which includes the Global Strategy for Shelter adopted in 1988.

5. During the course of human history, urbanization has been associated with economic and social progress, promotion of literacy and education, improvement of the general state of health, and greater access to social services, culture and political participation. Cities, towns and other urban areas have facilitated the evolution of knowledge, fine arts, industry and commerce. Cities are engines of growth and incubators of civilization.

6. To overcome current problems and to ensure future progress in improving environmental, social, economic, and political conditions in human settlements we must begin with a recognition of the challenges facing cities. By the turn of the century one half of all people will live and work in urban areas. By the year 2025, almost two thirds of the world's population will be urban dwellers. The most serious problems confronting cities worldwide include lack of employment opportunities, spreading homelessness and expansion of squatter settlements, increased poverty and a widening gap between rich and poor, growing insecurity, deterioration of building stock, services and infrastructure, improper land use, rising traffic congestion and pollution, lack of green spaces, and an increasing vulnerability to disaster, all of which have seriously challenged capacities of Governments. Rapid rates of migration to, and population growth in, the mega-cities of the world pose a particularly significant challenge for sustainable development, urban planning and management. These are the places where large sections of the world's urban population live in inadequate conditions and are confronted with unsurpassed environmental problems that require increased managerial capacities, investments and resource mobilization and appropriate allocation.

7. Rural settlements represent areas of great challenge and opportunity for renewed developmental efforts. For many rural settlements, infrastructure and services, particularly those relating to water, health and education, are not provided. Rural development efforts and new technologies can help to improve the linkage of these settlements with the mainstream of the economic, social and cultural life in the globalized world and allow their populations access to services, trade and employment opportunities.

8. Cities, towns and rural settlements are linked through movement of goods, resources and people. As rural population growth has outpaced the generation of employment and economic opportunities, rural-to-urban migration

has steadily increased. Urban areas have become destinations of hope for many rural poor. It is urgent to seek new approaches to eradicating rural poverty through sustainable economic development.

9. More people than ever are living in poverty without adequate shelter. Inadequate shelter and homelessness are growing plights in many countries threatening standards of health, security and even life itself. In the meantime the rapidly increasing number of refugees and internally displaced persons, as a result of human-made disasters in many regions of the world, is aggravating the shelter crisis, highlighting the need for its speedy solution on a durable basis. Everyone should be entitled to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.

10. Although Governments at all levels often lack legal, institutional, financial and human resources to respond adequately to rapid urbanization, many local authorities are taking on these challenges with open, accountable and effective leadership and are eager to bring their citizens into the sustainable development process. Enabling structures that facilitate independent initiative and creativity, as well as encourage a wide range of partnerships, must be promoted. Furthermore, empowering women and men to participate equally in all activities related to human settlements is the basis for civic engagement.

11. There are critical differences regarding human settlements between different nations and within nations that make it necessary to adjust the implementation of the Global Plan of Action, taking into account the specific situation of each country.

12. The Habitat Agenda issues a global call to action. It offers, within a framework of principles and commitments, a positive vision of sustainable human settlements - where all women and men have adequate shelter, productive and freely chosen employment, a healthy and safe environment and access to basic services . The Global Plan of Action will guide efforts to turn the vision into reality.

II. GOALS AND PRINCIPLES[1]

13. We, the Member States of the United Nations, adopt the goals of *adequate shelter for all* and *sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world*. We believe that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace is a prerequisite and an essential condition to attaining these goals. Civil, ethnic and religious strife, armed conflicts, terrorism, foreign aggression or occupation are destructive to human settlements, and should therefore be renounced by all States. We subscribe to the following principles to guide us in our actions in attaining these goals.

A. Equality

14. Fairness and justice are central to sustainable social and economic development. Equitable human settlements are those in which all people - women and men, children and youth - have equal access to basic housing, infrastructure, health care, green and open spaces, and other services; equal opportunity for education, for a productive and freely chosen livelihood and for personal, spiritual, cultural and social development; equal rights and obligations with regard to the conservation and use of natural and cultural resources; equal opportunity to participate in public decision-making; and equal access to mechanisms to ensure that rights are not violated.

B. Eradication of poverty

15. Eradication of poverty is essential for sustainable human settlements and for preserving peace. The principle of poverty eradication is based on the objective of meeting the basic needs of low-income groups within human settlements, and on the goal of full, productive and freely-chosen employment and work.

C. Sustainable development

16. Human settlements and sustainable development processes shall be mutually supportive and interdependent. Sustainable development is essential to human settlements development. Human settlements shall be planned, developed and improved in a manner which takes full account of sustainable development. Sustainable human settlements ensure economic development, employment opportunities and social progress with the least possible detrimental impact on the environment. They should not exceed the carrying capacity of ecosystems, nor should they inhibit the opportunities of future generations. Production, consumption and transport are managed in ways that replenish the stock of resources while drawing upon them. Sustainability of human settlements entails the maintenance of biological diversity and cultural diversity, promotion of human health, as well as air, water and soil qualities at standards sufficient to sustain human life and well-being for all time.

D. Livability

17. The quality of life of the people depends, among other social and economic factors, on the physical conditions and spatial characteristics of our villages, towns and cities. City lay-out and aesthetics, land-use patterns, population and building densities and ease of access to adequate public amenities all have crucial bearing on the livability of settlements. Therefore, people's needs and aspirations for more livable neighbourhoods and settlements should guide the processes of design, management and maintenance of human settlements whereby public health is protected, safety and security conditions are provided, social integration, respect for diversity and cultural identities are promoted, and spiritual, historic and culturally significant buildings and districts are properly preserved.

E. Family

18. [The family, as a basic unit of society, is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. Its constructive role for all sustainable settlements should be recognized and enhanced by all States. All necessary conditions for its integration, preservation, improvement and protection within an adequate shelter, with access to basic services and with decent livelihood should be facilitated. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist.]

F. Civic engagement and Government responsibility

19. All people have basic rights but must also accept their responsibility to protect the rights of others - including future generations - and to contribute actively to the common good. Sustainable human settlements are those that generate a sense of citizenship and identity, a spirit of voluntarism and civic engagement, where all people are encouraged and have equal opportunity to participate in decision-making and development. Governments at all levels, including local authorities, have a responsibility to protect their citizens' health, safety and general welfare and to ensure that all rights are protected under law. This requires establishing policies, laws and regulations for both public

and private activities, encouraging socially responsible private activities, adopting transparent procedures, encouraging public-spirited leadership and public-private partnerships, and helping people to understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities through open and effective participatory processes, universal education, and information dissemination.

G. Partnerships

20. Partnerships between and among all actors from public, private and community organizations and individuals are essential to the development of sustainable human settlements and the provision of adequate shelter and basic services. Partnerships have the ability to integrate and mutually support objectives of broad-based participation through, *inter alia*, forming alliances; pooling resources; sharing knowledge; contributing skills; and capitalizing on comparative advantages of collective actions. These processes can be strengthened by increased effectiveness of civil organization.

H. Solidarity

21. Tolerance, sensitivity to the plight of the less fortunate, and cooperation among all social groups, starting with the family as the basic social unit, is one of the foundations for social cohesion. International solidarity, cooperation and assistance shall be offered by the international community, by States and all other relevant actors to respond to challenges of urbanization, to promote sound and effective international, national and local policies and instruments, to strengthen cooperation among States, regions, local authorities and non-governmental organizations, as well as to mobilize complementary resources to meet all these challenges.

I. International cooperation and coordination

22. [To safeguard the global interest of present and future generations in human settlements is one of the fundamental goals of the international community. The implementation of the Global Plan of Action will require an increased flow of new and additional financial resources to developing countries in order to cover the incremental costs of the actions they have to undertake to deal with human settlements problems and to accelerate sustainable development.]

III. COMMITMENTS

23. Embracing the foregoing principles, as Member States of the United Nations, we dedicate ourselves to implement the Habitat Agenda through national plans of action and other policies and programmes drafted and executed in cooperation with all key actors and assisted by the international community. To this end, we make the following commitments:

A. Adequate shelter for all

24. We commit ourselves to the goal of improving living and working conditions on an equitable and sustainable basis, so that everyone will have adequate shelter, including basic services, facilities and amenities which are healthy, safe, secure, accessible and affordable.

25. We further commit ourselves to the objectives of:

(a) Ensuring consistency of macroeconomic and shelter policies and strategies, in order to support resource mobilization, employment generation and poverty eradication;

(b) Promoting security of tenure and equal access to serviced land, especially by women and the poor;

(c) Promoting access to efficient and effective housing finance for all;

(d) Promoting locally available, appropriate, affordable, safe, efficient and environmentally friendly construction methods, materials and technologies;

(e) Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing, respecting the rights and obligations of both tenants and owners;

(f) Promoting rehabilitation, upgrading and maintenance of existing housing stock;

(g) Eradicating discrimination in the access to shelter which is based on gender, age, family, ethnicity, religion [or for any other improper reason]; and

(h) Promoting shelter and basic services for the homeless, internally displaced, migrants, indigenous groups and victims of natural and human-made disasters.

B. Sustainable human settlements

26. We commit ourselves to the goal of sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world by developing economies that will make efficient use of resources within the carrying capacity of ecosystems and by providing all people with equal opportunities for a healthy, safe and productive life in harmony with nature and cultural heritage and spiritual and cultural values, ensuring social progress.

27. We further commit ourselves to the objectives of:

(a) Promoting socially integrated human settlements, combating segregation, discriminatory and other exclusionary policies and practices and recognizing and respecting the rights of all, especially women and the poor;

(b) Acknowledging and harnessing the potential of the informal sector, where appropriate, in providing housing and services for the poor;

(c) Promoting changes in production and consumption patterns and settlements structures that will protect natural resources - including water, air, biodiversity, energy and land - providing a healthy living environment for all;

(d) Promoting spatial development patterns that reduce transport demand, as well as creating efficient, effective and environmentally sound transport systems that improve accessibility to work, goods, services and amenities;

(e) Preserving productive land in urban and rural areas and protecting fragile ecosystems from the negative impacts of human settlements;

(f) Protecting and maintaining historic and cultural heritage, including traditional shelter and settlements patterns, as appropriate, as well as landscapes and urban flora and fauna in open and green spaces;

(g) Enabling competitive and sustainable economic development that will attract investments, generate employment and provide revenues for human settlements development;

(h) Alleviating undesired impacts of structural adjustment and economic transition on human settlements; and

(i) Reducing the impact of natural and human-made disasters on human settlements .

C. Enablement

28. We commit ourselves to the strategy of enabling all key actors, in the public, private and community sectors, to play an effective role - at national, state/provincial, metropolitan and local levels - in human settlements and shelter development .

29. We further commit ourselves to the objectives of:

(a) Exercising public authority and using public resources with transparency and accountability;

(b) Decentralizing authority and resources, as appropriate, as well as functions and responsibilities to the level most effective in addressing needs of people in their settlements;

(c) Promoting institutional and legal frameworks and capacity-building conducive to civic engagement and broad-based participation in human settlements development;

(d) Capacity-building for human settlements management and development;

(e) Supporting institutional and legal enabling frameworks for mobilizing financial resources for sustainable shelter and human settlements development; and

(f) Promoting equal access to reliable information, utilizing, where appropriate, modern communications technology and networks.

D. Financing shelter and human settlements

30. We commit ourselves to strengthening existing financial mechanisms and, where appropriate, developing new mechanisms for financing the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, which will mobilize increased sources of finance - public, private, multilateral and bilateral - at international, regional, national and local levels; and will promote the efficient, effective and accountable resource allocation and management.

31. We further commit ourselves to the objectives of :

(a) Stimulating national and local economies, through enabling competitive and sustainable economic development, that will attract public and international financial resources and private investments, generate employment and increase revenues, providing a stronger financial base to support shelter and human settlements development;

(b) Strengthening fiscal and financial management capacity, at all levels, to fully develop the taxation base, pricing mechanisms and other sources of revenue;

(c) Enhancing public revenue through the use, as appropriate, of fiscal instruments which are conducive to environmentally friendly practices, in order to promote direct support for sustainable human settlements;

(d) Strengthening regulatory and legal frameworks to enable markets to work and to facilitate independent initiative and creativity, as well as to encourage a wide range of partnerships to finance shelter and human settlements development;

(e) Promoting increased equitable access to credit for all;

(f) Adopting, where appropriate, transparent, timely, predictable and performance-based mechanisms for transfer of funds between different levels of government; and

(g) targeting, where appropriate, subsidies to those who are not served by the market, and promoting appropriate credit mechanisms and other instruments to address their needs.

E. International cooperation

[32. We commit ourselves - in the interests of international peace, security, justice and stability - to enhancing international cooperation and partnerships which will assist in the implementation of the national and the global plans of action and the attainment of the goals of the Habitat Agenda, by contributing to and participating in multilateral, regional and bilateral cooperation programmes and institutional arrangements and technical and financial assistance programmes; by the exchange of appropriate technology; by the collection, analysis and dissemination of information about shelter and human settlements, and by international networking.

33. We further commit ourselves to the objectives of:

(a) Striving for the fulfilment of the accepted target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance, as soon as possible, as well as increasing, within it, the share for funding for human settlements and shelter development;

(b) Using resources and economic instruments in an effective, efficient and equitable manner, at the local, national, regional and international levels; and

(c) Promoting responsive international cooperation between public, private and non-profit, non-governmental and community organizations.]

F. Assessing progress

34. We commit ourselves to monitor and evaluate, within our own countries, efforts to implement national plans of action, striving to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in meeting the goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development.

35. We further commit ourselves to the objective of enhancing the role and strengthening the institutional capacity of UNCHS (Habitat) as an agency of coordination and cooperation assisting the Member States of the United Nations to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, using shelter and urban indicators and best practices as a basis for assessing global conditions and trends in shelter and human settlements development.

IV. GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION: STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. Introduction

36. Twenty years ago in Vancouver, at Habitat I, the world community adopted an agenda for human settlements development. The twenty years since 1976 have seen remarkable changes in population and social, political, environmental and economic circumstances which affect our strategic outlook. Many societies have changed their views on the appropriate role of government. This has led Governments to adopt and promote enabling policies to facilitate actions by individuals, communities and the private sector to improve human settlements conditions.

37. Over these twenty years, world population has increased from about 4.2 billion to about 5.7 billion, and people increasingly have come to live in cities. By the turn of the century, humankind will be crossing a threshold where over 50 per cent of the population will live in urban areas. Meeting the needs of the nearly two billion more expected in the coming two decades and managing human settlements towards sustainability will be a daunting task. Rapid urbanization and the growth of mega-cities, particularly in developing countries, represent at the same time new opportunities and challenging difficulties.

38. In the economic sphere, the increasing globalization of the economy means that people in communities are trading in broader markets and investment funds are more often available from international sources. As a result, the level of economic development has increased in many countries. At the same time, the gap between poor and rich - countries as well as people - has widened. New communications technology makes information much more widely accessible and accelerates all processes of change. In many societies, new issues of social cohesion and personal security have emerged and the issue of solidarity has become central. Unemployment, environmental degradation, social disintegration and the increasing movements of people, as well as intolerance and violence, have also emerged as critical factors. We must keep these new conditions in view as we draw up human settlements strategies for the first two decades of the twenty-first century.

39. While Habitat II is a conference of States and there are many things national Governments can do to enable local communities to solve problems, the actors who will determine success or failure in improving the human settlements condition are mostly found at the community level in both public and private sectors. It is they, local authorities and other stakeholders, who are on the front lines in achieving the goals of recent global conferences and of Habitat II. Although the structural causes of the problems often have to be dealt with at the national and sometimes international level, progress will depend to a large degree on local authorities, civic engagement, and the forging of partnerships among all levels of government with the private sector, the cooperative sector, with workers and employers and the civil society at large.

40. Habitat II is the last of an extraordinary series of world conferences held under the auspices of the United Nations over the past five years. All addressed important issues of people-centred sustainable development and equity, for which successful implementation requires action at all levels, particularly at the local level. Strategies on social, environmental, disaster reduction, population and gender issues will have to be implemented in urban areas and everywhere else where the problems are acute and generate tension.

41. In Habitat II, Governments at all levels and the community and private sector considered how the achievement of the two principal themes of *Adequate shelter for all* and *Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world* can be furthered at the local level through an enabling process in which individuals in their communities play the largest role. This is what is special about the Habitat II Global Plan of Action and its strategies for implementation. Implementation of these measures will need to be adapted to the specific situation of each country.

42. The strategy of the Global Plan of Action is that of enablement, by which all women and men work with Government at all levels, with the private sector, with other non-governmental organizations, and with each other in their own communities to determine the collective future they want, to decide on priorities for action, to identify and allocate resources fairly, to build partnerships to achieve common goals, and to ensure that goals are consistent with basic principles. Enablement creates:

(a) The conditions for women and men to exercise their individual rights and responsibilities and to engage their abilities effectively in activities that will equitably improve and sustain their living environments;

(b) The conditions for all organizations and institutions to interact and network, building partnerships for sustainable development; and

(c) The conditions for self-improvement by Government.

B. Adequate shelter for all

1. Introduction

43. Adequate shelter means more than a roof over one's head. It means adequate privacy, adequate space, adequate security, structural stability and durability, adequate lighting and ventilation, adequate basic infrastructure, water, sanitation and waste management and adequate location with regard to work and basic facilities - all at an affordable cost. Conditions of adequacy often vary from country to country, as they depend on specific cultural, climatic and economic factors.

[44. All citizens of all States have a right to expect their Governments to be concerned about their shelter needs and to accept a fundamental obligation to enable people to obtain adequate shelter and to protect and improve dwellings and neighbourhoods. Since 1987, the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and the subsequent adoption by the General Assembly of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, Governments have made a number of fundamental changes in existing approaches to the shelter problem. This general trend toward the adoption of an enabling approach needs to be continued and strengthened in order to mobilize the full potential and resources of all the actors in the shelter production and improvement processes. Ultimately, an "enabling concept" implies that the people concerned will be given the opportunity to improve their housing conditions according to the needs and priorities that they themselves will define.]

45. Because it leads to the full mobilization of all potential indigenous resources, a shelter strategy based on an enabling approach greatly contributes to sustainable human settlements development. The management of these resources must be ecologically, socially and economically sound. This can only occur if policies and actions in the shelter sector are integrated with those which are intended to promote sustainable development throughout a country. Integration of shelter policies with policies that will guide macroeconomic and social development and sound environmental management is, therefore, a fundamental objective for this chapter.

46. Enabling markets, the primary housing delivery mechanism, to perform their function with efficiency is a second fundamental objective of this chapter. Actions, including necessary compensatory measures, are recommended to achieve this objective and, at the same time, contribute to social goals. Further objectives and recommended actions address components of shelter delivery systems (land, finance, infrastructure and services, construction, building materials, maintenance and rehabilitation) and how they can be made to better serve all people. Finally, special attention is given to vulnerable groups which, because they lack security of tenure or are inhibited from participation in shelter markets, are at considerable risk. Recommended actions are aimed at reducing their vulnerability and enabling them to obtain adequate shelter in a just and humane way.

47. International cooperation will be both necessary and beneficial in promoting adequate shelter for all.

2. National shelter policies

48. The formulation and periodic review and revision of a national shelter policy, with a view to creating efficient and effective shelter delivery systems, are the cornerstone for the provision of adequate shelter for all. A fundamental principle in formulating a realistic shelter policy is its interdependence with overall macroeconomic and social development policies. Shelter policies, while focusing on establishing a framework to cope with increasing demand for housing and infrastructure, should also emphasize the increased use of existing stock and rental options, responding to the diversity of needs. They should also encourage and support the people who in most developing countries, individually or collectively, act as the main producers of housing. Policies should respond to the diverse needs of the poor, refugees, women, displaced and indigenous people and vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, most of whom live in squatter settlements, or in poorly constructed or dilapidated houses.

Actions

49. To integrate national shelter policies with macroeconomic, social and environmental policies, Governments, as appropriate, should:

(a) Establish and implement consultative mechanisms among governmental authorities responsible for economic, environmental, social, human settlements and shelter policies so as to coordinate the shelter sector in a coherent manner, including the identification of the market and of precise criteria for subsidies;

(b) Take into account the impacts of macroeconomic policies on shelter delivery systems, considering their specific inter-linkages;

(c) Strengthen the contribution of shelter policies to employment generation, to resource mobilization, to environmental protection and to the stimulation of, and support for, sustainable economic and social development activities;

(d) Apply public policies, including fiscal policies and planning policies, to stimulate sustainable shelter markets and land development;

(e) Integrate shelter policies with policies for poverty reduction and job creation, for environmental protection and for the protection of vulnerable groups; and

(f) Strengthen housing information systems and make use of relevant research activities in policy development.

50. To formulate and implement policies that promote the enablement approach, Governments at all levels should:

(a) Employ broad-based participatory and consultative mechanisms involving representatives from public, private, non-governmental, cooperative and community sectors, at all levels, in the policy development process;

(b) Establish appropriate mechanisms for coordination and decentralization, defining clear local-level responsibilities within the policy development process; and

(c) Establish and adopt a regulatory framework and provide institutional support for facilitating participation and partnership arrangements at all levels.

51. To adopt and implement a cross-sectoral approach to policy development, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities should:

(a) Integrate shelter policies with regional and urban planning, human settlements, land and infrastructure policies;

(b) Take full account of environmentally sustainable development principles while formulating and implementing housing policies; and

(c) Encourage the development of environmentally sound and affordable construction activities and building materials production and distribution, including strengthening the indigenous building materials industry based as far as possible on locally available resources.

52. To improve shelter delivery systems, Governments at appropriate levels should:

(a) Adopt an enabling approach to shelter development in both rural and urban areas;

(b) Establish priorities for natural, human, technical and financial resource allocation;

(c) Develop and support adequate institutional frameworks, especially those needed to facilitate investments in both rural and urban shelter supply by the private sector;

(d) Review and adjust, when necessary, the legal, fiscal and regulatory framework to respond to the special needs of the poor and low-income population;

(e) Periodically review shelter finance policies and systems, taking into consideration their impacts on the environment, on economic development and on social welfare; and

(f) Promote and adopt policies which coordinate and encourage the adequate supply of key inputs required for the construction of housing and infrastructure such as land, finance, building materials, etc.

3. Shelter delivery systems

(a) Enabling markets to work

53. In many countries, markets serve as the primary housing delivery mechanism and their role should, therefore, be enhanced. It is the responsibility of Governments to create an enabling environment for a well-functioning housing market. The housing sector should be viewed as a single integrated market in which trends in one segment affect the performance in another segment. Government interventions may be required to cater for the needs of the poor and vulnerable groups, who are not served by markets.

Actions

54. To ensure market efficiency, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities at all levels should:

(a) Assess housing demand and supply and collect, analyse and disseminate information about housing markets and other delivery mechanisms and encourage the private sector and the media to do the same;

(b) Avoid inappropriate interventions which stifle supply and distort demand for housing and services, and periodically review and adjust legal and regulatory frameworks, including those for contracts, land use, building codes and standards;

(c) Employ mechanisms (a body of property law, a *cadastre*, rules for property valuation and others) for the clear definition of property rights;

(d) Permit exchange of [land and] housing without undue restriction and apply procedures that will make property transactions transparent and accountable to prevent corrupt practices; and

(e) Apply appropriate fiscal measures, including taxation, to promote the supply of housing and land.

(b) Ensuring access to land

55. Access to land is a strategic prerequisite to the provision of adequate shelter for all. It is also a precondition for breaking the vicious circle of poverty. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should strive to overcome all possible obstacles which may hamper equitable access to land. The failure to adopt, at all levels, appropriate rural and urban land policies and land management practices remains a primary cause of inequity and poverty. It is also a cause for increasing living costs, occupation of hazard prone land, environmental degradation and urban and rural vulnerability, affecting all people, especially the poor.

Actions

56. To ensure an adequate supply of serviceable land, Governments at the appropriate levels should:

(a) Recognize and legitimize the diversity of land delivery mechanisms;

(b) Decentralize land management responsibilities, together with the provision for local capacity-building programmes which recognize the role of other key stakeholders, where appropriate;

(c) Prepare comprehensive inventories of publicly-held land, and, where appropriate, develop programmes for making it gradually available for shelter and human settlements development;

(d) Apply transparent, comprehensive, easily accessible and progressive taxation and incentive mechanisms to stimulate efficient, environmentally sound and equitable use of land; exploit the full potential of land-based and other forms of taxation in mobilizing financial resources for service provision by local authorities;

(e) Consider fiscal and other measures, as appropriate, to prevent hoarding of vacant land for speculative purposes and thus increase the supply of land for shelter development;

(f) Develop land information systems and practices for land-value assessment;

(g) Make full use of existing infrastructure in urban areas, encouraging densification of occupation of available serviced land;

(h) Take advantage of innovative instruments which capture land value gains and recover public investments;

(i) Develop appropriate cadastral systems and streamline land registration procedures in order to facilitate regularization of informal settlements [and simplify land transactions];

(j) Develop land codes, and other land laws that define the nature of land and real property and the rights that are formally recognized;

(k) Mobilize local and regional expertise to promote research, transfer of technology and education programmes to support land administration systems;

(l) Promote comprehensive rural development, including land reform, land improvement and economic diversification; and

(m) Ensure simple procedures for [the transfer of land and] conversion of land use.

57 To ensure efficient land markets and the equitable and environmentally sustainable use of land, Governments at the appropriate levels should:

(a) Re-evaluate and, if necessary, periodically adjust planning and building regulatory frameworks taking into consideration their human settlements and environmental policies;

[(b) Support the development of land markets by effective legislative arrangements; develop flexible and varied mechanisms aimed at mobilizing lands with diverse juridical status;]

(c) Encourage the multiplicity and diversity of intervention of stakeholders acting within the market system;

(d) Develop rules of land use aimed at optimizing construction rights while protecting the environment, minimizing risk and diversifying uses; and

(e) Review restrictive and costly legal and regulatory processes, planning systems, standards and development regulations.

58. To eradicate legal and social barriers to the equitable access to land, especially by women, Governments at the appropriate levels, in partnership with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, the cooperative sector, and community-based organizations should:

(a) Address the cultural, ethnic and religious causes that result in the creation of barriers that lead to segregation and exclusion;

(b) Promote awareness campaigns, education and enabling practices to overcome existing barriers;

(c) Review legal and regulatory frameworks, adjusting them to the principles and commitments of the Global Plan of Action and ensuring that equal rights of women and men are clearly specified and enforced;

(d) Develop regularization programmes and formulate and implement these programmes and projects in consultation with the concerned population and organized groups, taking into account the needs differentiated by gender;

(e) Acknowledge the plight of women in informal urban settlements, particularly women heads of households, and eradicate the legal restrictions on their competence to own [land and] property; and

(f) Provide mechanisms for the protection of women who risk losing their homes and properties when their husbands die.

59. To facilitate access to land and security of tenure for all socio-economic groups, Governments, at the appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Adopt an enabling legal and regulatory framework, based on an enhanced knowledge, understanding and acceptance of existing practices and land delivery mechanisms, to stimulate partnerships with the private business and community sectors, in specifying recognized types of land tenure and prescribing procedures for regularization of tenure where needed;

(b) Provide institutional support, improve accountability and transparency of land management, provide accurate information on [land ownership, land transactions,] current and planned land use, etc;

(c) Explore innovative arrangements to enhance security of tenure, other than full legalization, which may be too costly and time-consuming in certain situations, and provide the necessary backing to such innovative arrangements to ensure that access to credit may be obtained in the absence of a conventional title deed;

(d) Capitalize on the potential contribution of key stakeholders in the private formal and informal sectors; support the engagement of non-governmental organizations, community organizations and the private sector in participatory and collective initiatives and mechanisms appropriate to conflict resolution;

(e) Encourage particularly participation of community and non-governmental organizations by:

(i) Reviewing and adjusting the legal and regulatory frameworks in order to recognize and stimulate the diverse forms of organization of the population in land, housing and services production and management;

(ii) Developing and implementing financial systems that recognize organizations as credit holders, extend credit to collective units backed by collective collateral and introduce financial procedures that are adapted to the needs of housing production by the people themselves, and to the modalities through which the population generates income and savings;

(iii) Developing and implementing complementary measures to overcome the economic and operational limitations of social organizations, including fiscal support, educational and training programmes, technical assistance, funds in support of technological experimentation and innovation;

(iv) Supporting the capacity building and accumulation of experiences carried out by non-governmental organizations and peoples' organizations in order to make them efficient and competent partners in the implementation of national housing plans of action; and

(v) Encouraging lending institutions to recognize that community-based organizations may act as guarantors for individual women.

(c) Mobilizing sources of finance

60. Housing finance institutions serve the conventional market but do not always respond adequately to the different needs of large segments of the population including, in particular, the poor and women. To mobilize more domestic and international resources for housing finance and to extend credit to more households, it is necessary to integrate housing finance into the broader financial system, to focus subsidies on those who cannot be served by the market, and to create new instruments to address the financial needs of people having no access to credit.

Actions

61. To serve more people through existing housing finance systems, Governments at the appropriate levels should:

(a) Adjust monetary and fiscal policy to promote competition in resource mobilization and to facilitate extending more credit to the poor and maintaining the solvency of credit systems;

(b) Strengthen the effectiveness of existing housing finance systems;

(c) Enhance accessibility to housing finance systems;

(d) Ensure safe and sound ethical practices in financial transactions through support by effective legal and regulatory frameworks;

(e) Establish property rights and enforce foreclosure laws to facilitate private-sector participation;

(f) Encourage the private sector to mobilize resources to meet varying housing demands including rental housing;

(g) Support competitive mortgage markets and, where appropriate, facilitate the development of secondary markets and securitization;

(h) Decentralize their lending operations and encourage the private sector to do the same in order to provide greater physical access to credit, especially in rural areas;

(i) Encourage all lending institutions to improve their management and efficiency of operations; and

(j) Encourage community mortgage programmes that are accessible to poor women.

62. To create new housing finance mechanisms, Governments at all levels should:

(a) Harness the potential of non-traditional financing arrangements by encouraging communities to form housing and multi-purpose community development cooperatives, especially for the provision of low-cost housing;

(b) Review and strengthen the legal and regulatory framework and institutional base for mobilizing non-traditional lenders;

(c) Encourage in particular, by removing legal and administrative obstacles, the expansion of savings and credit cooperatives - "credit unions" , cooperative banks and cooperative insurance enterprises;

(d) Support partnerships between such cooperative institutions and public financing institutions as an effective means to mobilize local capital and apply it to local entrepreneurial and community activity for housing and infrastructure development;

(e) Encourage trade unions, farmers', women's and consumers' organizations and other associations of the concerned populations to set up their own cooperatively organized financial institutions and mechanisms; and

(f) Promote the exchange of information on innovations in housing finance.

63. To facilitate access to housing to those not served by existing finance mechanisms, Governments should review and rationalize, where appropriate, systems of subsidies by policies that will ensure their viability, equity and transparency, allowing many of those without access to credit and land to enter the market.

(d) Ensuring access to basic infrastructure and services

64. Basic infrastructure and services at the community level include the delivery of safe water, sanitation, waste management, social welfare, transport and communications facilities, energy, health and emergency services, schools, public safety and the management of open spaces, among others. The lack of adequate basic services, a key component of shelter, exacts a heavy toll on human health, productivity and the quality of life, particularly for the urban and rural poor. Local and state/provincial authorities, as the case may be, have the primary responsibility for the delivery of services, regulated by appropriate legislation and standards. Their capacity to manage, operate, and maintain infrastructure and basic services must be supported by national Governments. There are, however, a host of other actors, including the private sector, communities and non-governmental organizations, who can participate in service provision under the coordination of Governments at all levels.

Actions

65. To safeguard the health, safety, welfare and improved living environment of all people and to provide adequate and affordable basic infrastructure and services, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in cooperation with all other stakeholders should [ensure]:

(a) The supply of and access to adequate quantities of safe drinking water;

(b) Adequate sanitation and waste management;

(c) Access to affordable public transport and communications facilities;

(d) Equitable allocation of social services;

(e) Access to sustainable sources of energy; and

(f) The provision and maintenance of adequate roads, streets, parks and open spaces.

66. To ensure the equitable provision of basic infrastructure and service delivery systems, Governments at all levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Join with all stakeholders in providing serviced land and/or in allocating adequate space for all basic services, including recreational open space, etc. in development schemes;

(b) Involve local communities in decision-making and in setting priorities for the provision of services;

(c) Advise local communities in setting standards for, and the operation and maintenance of, community facilities;

(d) Support efforts of academic and professional groups in analysing the need for infrastructure and services at the community level;

(e) Facilitate the mobilization of funds from all stakeholders for increased investment in the sector;

(f) Establish support mechanisms to enable the poor and disadvantaged to have access to basic infrastructure and services; and

(g) Promote the dialogue of all local actors to help provide basic services and infrastructure.

67. To ensure the efficiency of infrastructure and service provision and their operation and maintenance practices, Governments at all levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Create mechanisms to promote autonomous, transparent and accountable management of services at the lowest possible level;

(b) Encourage the private sector to participate in the competitive delivery of basic services;

(c) Promote the application of appropriate and environmentally friendly technologies for infrastructure and services delivery on a cost-effective basis;

(d) Establish, and where necessary, improve their regulatory capacity when forming partnerships with the private sector for the delivery of services; and

(e) Establish contractual agreements with community groups, where feasible, for the construction, operation and maintenance of infrastructure and services.

(e) Improving construction, maintenance and rehabilitation

68. With rapid urbanization, population growth and industrialization, the skills, materials and financing for construction, maintenance and rehabilitation of housing, infrastructure and other facilities are not often available or are of inferior quality. Public policy and private investment should, together, ensure an adequate supply of building

materials, construction technology and bridging finance to avoid the bottlenecks and distortions that inhibit the development of local and national economies. By improving the quality and reducing the cost of production, housing and other public structures will last longer, be protected against disaster: be affordable to low-income populations and will provide a better living environment. The potential for job creation, and other external socio-economic impacts of the construction industry should be harnessed, its impact on the environment should be minimized to an acceptable level and its contribution to overall economic growth should be exploited, all to the advantage of society at large. Institutional support in the form of industrial standards and quality control, with particular attention to health and consumer safety protection requirements in urban areas, should also be provided.

Actions

69. To respond to the effective demand for construction, maintenance and rehabilitation, Governments and local authorities should:

(a) Strengthen the capacities of training institutions and non-governmental organizations to increase the supply of skilled work force in construction and promote apprenticeship training and wage adjustments;

(b) Make use of community contracts and, where it exists, the informal sector for the construction, maintenance and rehabilitation of housing and local services, especially in low-income settlements, with emphasis on enhancing the participation and, thus, short and long-term gains of local communities;

(c) Strengthen the capacity of both public and private sectors for infrastructure delivery through cost-effective, employment intensive methods, thereby optimizing impact on employment creation;

(d) Provide incentives for engineers, architects, planners, contractors and their clients to design and build energy efficient structures and facilities by using, mainly, locally available resources and to reduce energy consumption in buildings in use;

(e) Support private-sector initiatives to provide bridging loans to builders at reasonable interest rates;

(f) Support professional groups in offering subsidized technical assistance in design, construction, maintenance, rehabilitation and management to community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, and others engaged in self-help and community-based development;

(g) Strengthen and make more transparent their regulatory and inspection systems;

(h) Join with professional societies to review and revise building codes and regulations based on current standards of engineering, building and planning practices, local conditions and ease of administration, and adoption of performance standards, where possible; and

(i) Support non-governmental organizations and other groups engaged in gender-specific work to ensure participation of women in the planning, design and layout of houses to suit their specific requirements.

70. To promote and support adequate supply of locally produced basic building materials, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in cooperation with all other stakeholders should:

(a) Encourage and support the establishment and expansion of environmentally friendly small-scale local building materials industries through legal and fiscal incentives and provision of credit;

(b) Set the rules for fair market competition for building materials with enhanced participation of local stake holders and establish a public mechanism to enforce them;

(c) Promote information exchange and flow of appropriate, environmentally friendly technologies and facilitate the transfer of technology;

(d) Encourage and support research and development of innovative building materials production, by making full use of regional experiences, and by translating research and development achievements into commercial production;

(e) Reformulate and adopt building standards and by-laws to promote and permit the use of low-cost building materials in housing schemes as well as by using such material in public construction works;

(f) Establish partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organizations to create mechanisms for commercial production and distribution of basic building materials for self-help construction programmes; and

(g) Evaluate on a regular basis the progress made in the pursuit of the above objectives.

71. To enhance local capacity in environmentally sound building materials production and construction techniques, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in cooperation with all stakeholders should:

(a) Intensify and support research efforts to find substitutes for or to optimize the use of non-renewable resources, particularly fossil fuels, reducing their polluting effects and paying special attention to recycling, re-use of waste materials and increased reforestation;

(b) Encourage and promote the application of low-energy, environmentally sound and safe manufacturing technologies backed by appropriate norms and effective regulatory measures; and

(c) Adopt mining and quarrying policies and practices that ensure minimum damage to the environment.

4. Vulnerable groups

72. Vulnerability is the inability to compete on an equal basis for resources and opportunities. If vulnerability is to be reduced, there is a need to improve and ensure access by the various vulnerable groups to shelter, finance, infrastructure services and safety nets. Vulnerable groups include the poorest groups, some of the aged, street children, migrants, refugees, inhabitants of disadvantaged communities, people affected by natural and human-caused disasters, households headed by women, the disabled and some indigenous people. With regard to shelter they are especially at risk where they may have no security of tenure or because they may be excluded, either inadvertently or deliberately, from housing markets and services.

Actions

73. To remove barriers and eradicate discrimination in the provision of shelter, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Review and revise legal and regulatory frameworks that act as barriers within the shelter sectors;

(b) Improve enforcement of existing laws and regulations that are intended to prevent discrimination and barriers;

(c) Work with the private sector, cooperatives and local communities and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the need to eliminate social exclusion, prejudice and discrimination in housing transactions and service provision;

(d) Consider becoming parties to the various United Nations conventions which deal with the specific and special needs of vulnerable groups; and

(e) Provide affordable and efficient public transport to make a wider range of housing and jobs accessible to vulnerable groups.

74. To provide for the shelter needs of vulnerable groups, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Provide, where appropriate, targeted and transparent subsidies, social services and safety nets to the most vulnerable groups;

(b) Work with the private sector and other actors to provide adequate housing for members of vulnerable groups;

(c) Strive to provide special living facilities for members of vulnerable groups; and

(d) Provide an environment that enables them to participate in the social, economic and political life of their country.

75. To reduce vulnerability, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Join with non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations to assist members of vulnerable groups to obtain secure tenure;

(b) Protect all people from unfair evictions including during dismantling of rent-control systems; where evictions are unavoidable they should be strictly according to the law;

(c) Support self-help housing programmes;

(d) Support efforts to improve living conditions with the provision of necessary services and support efforts to increase employment, improve living conditions and provide necessary services;

(e) Pursue policies which will provide information to and consultations with vulnerable groups; and

(f) Facilitate availability of legal information to vulnerable groups.

C. Sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world

1. Introduction

76. The rapid growth of cities, the concentration of urban population in large cities, the sprawl of cities into wider geographical areas and the rapid growth of mega-cities are the most significant transformations of human settlements. By the year 2000 more than half of the world's population will live in cities, and much of the remaining population will depend on cities for their economic and social well-being. The world of the twenty-first century will be dominated by cities. Among the economic and social factors influencing this process are demographic growth and migration, real and perceived employment opportunities, cultural expectations, changing consumption and production patterns and serious imbalances and disparities among regions.

77. The sustainability of planet Earth will not be achieved unless human settlements, and especially cities, are made economically buoyant, socially vibrant and environmentally sound, with full respect for cultural heritage and diversity. Urban settlements hold a promise for human development and protection of the world's natural resources through their ability to support large numbers of people while limiting their impact on the natural environment. Yet, cities are witnessing irrational and harmful patterns of production and consumption, of land use and of mobility, as well as degradation of their physical structure. They are often synonymous with soil, air and water pollution, waste of resources, and destruction of natural resources. Many of these trends are aggravated or accelerated by high urban fertility and the increasing magnitude and permanence of rural-to-urban migration. Therefore a largely urbanized world implies that sustainable development will depend very largely on the capacity of urban and metropolitan areas to manage production and consumption patterns needed to preserve the environment. The municipal level of Government is an effective partner in making human settlements viable, equitable and sustainable, as its level of administration is closest to the citizen. Local authorities need Governments to recognize their essential role and the role of international cooperation in securing the economic development, social welfare and environmental protection of their local communities.

78. Specific actions are needed because urbanization also poses specific economic, social and environmental problems and is at times perceived in largely negative terms. Policies and programmes for integrating underdeveloped rural areas into the national economy require strong subnational government institutions. Such institutions are still weak in many countries and their effectiveness is threatened by increasing problems of political regionalism and ethnic strife. All of these concerns and demands require a regional and cross-sectoral approach to human settlements planning which places emphasis on rural-urban linkages and treats villages and cities as two ends of a human settlements continuum in a common ecosystem. Increasingly, cities have a network of linkages that extend far beyond their own, and even national, boundaries.

79. The demands of development must be integrated, within the regional context, and within the carrying capacity of the environment. The unsafe disposal of urban waste leads to the degradation of the natural environment: aquifers, coastal zones, wetlands, animal habitats, forests and other fragile ecosystems are affected, as well as the homelands of indigenous people.

80. The development of rural settlements requires sustainable agricultural activities as well as an increase in employment opportunities by encouraging appropriate and environmentally sustainable investment in industry and related economic production and service activities. The living and working conditions in all human settlements, including regional urban centres, rural service centres, market towns and villages, must be improved, with particular emphasis on shelter, infrastructure and services.

81. International cooperation is both necessary and beneficial in promoting sustainable human settlements development in such critical areas as rational energy and land use; environmental protection and management; disaster prevention, preparedness and management; the rehabilitation and conservation of cultural and historical heritage; and industry, infrastructure and services.

2. Sustainable land use

82. Land resources are the basis for living systems and provide soil, energy, water and the opportunity for all human activities. In rapidly growing urban areas, access to land is rendered increasingly difficult by the conflicting demands of housing, industry, commerce, infrastructure, transport and the need for open spaces and green areas. Furthermore, the rising costs of urban land prevent the poor from gaining access to suitable land. Harmonizing the development of urban areas with the natural environment and the overall system of settlements is one of the basic requirements to achieving a sustainable urbanized world. Tools for achieving a physically more balanced development include specific urban policies, legal, financial, cultural and other measures, but also innovative methods of urban planning and design, urban development, renewal and management. The precautionary principle and the use of impact assessments are essential.

83. Many cities are using peripheral land for urban-related purposes in a wasteful manner while existing serviced land and infrastructure may not be fully developed and used. To avoid unbalanced, unhealthy and unsustainable growth of human settlements, it is necessary to promote land-use patterns that are a precondition for minimizing transport demands, saving energy and protecting open spaces. Healthy urban density and mixed land-uses are of prime importance and serve as important guidelines for urban development. National, regional and local policies must be carefully re-examined to ensure optimal land use and geographically better balanced economic development, including protection of indispensable agricultural land, land that carries national habitats which sustain biodiversity, fragile areas including coastal areas, as well as other sensitive areas in need of protection.

Actions

84. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, with the support of the relevant international and regional institutions, should support the cities in their efforts to establish sustainable urban land-use patterns and, to this end, should:

(a) Establish, as appropriate, national legislation to guide the implementation of public policies for sustainable urban development, land utilization, housing, and for the improved management of urban growth;

(b) Ensure efficient and accessible land markets that are responsive to demand and meet community development needs;

(c) Develop fiscal incentives and land-use control measures, including land-use planning solutions for a more rational and sustainable use of limited land resources;

(d) Focus greater attention on meeting the capital investment requirements of human settlements through enhanced resource mobilization strategies and policies that facilitate greater flows of private investment in urban development in such locations that contribute to sustainable land-use patterns;

(e) Encourage partnerships among the public and private sectors and other stakeholders in managing land resources for sustainable urban development;

(f) Develop and support the implementation of improved land-management practices that deal comprehensively with competing urban land requirements for housing, industry, commerce, infrastructure, transport and green spaces;

(g) Promote the integration of land-use and transport planning to encourage development patterns that reduce transport demand;

(h) Provide tools and capacities for transparent urban monitoring and reporting activities based on appropriate indicators for the environmental, social and economic performance of cities; and

(i) Institutionalize a participatory approach to a sustainable urban development, based on a continuous dialogue between the actors involved in urban development; and

(j) Strengthen lawful community-based land-resource protection practices in existing urban settlements.

85. To develop and support improved and integrated land-management, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Develop integrated land information and mapping systems;

(b) Establish administrative or quasi-judicial local structures, such as commissions and tribunals for the enforcement of land management laws and regulations in order to make enforcement and appeals more efficient and effective; and

(c) Develop the land market by effective legislative arrangements in order to mobilize lands with diverse juridical status.

3. Poverty reduction and employment creation

86. Promoting equitable, socially viable and stable human settlements is conditional on reducing and eventually eradicating poverty. The eradication of poverty requires universal access to economic opportunities that will promote sustainable livelihood through freely chosen productive employment and work, and basic social services, as well as special efforts to facilitate such access for the disadvantaged. No universal solution can be found for global application. Rather, people living in poverty must be empowered through organization and participation in all aspects of political, economic and social life. Key elements of a poverty reduction strategy include policies geared to more equitable distribution of wealth and income; provision of social protection for those who cannot support themselves; human resource development; improved infrastructural facilities; and comprehensive provision for the basic needs of all.

Actions

87. To promote equitable service provision in cities, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Formulate and implement integrated settlement development policies which ensure the equitable access to and maintenance of essential services; and

(b) Where appropriate, re-direct public resources in support of community-based management of services and infrastructure, and promote the participation of local communities, including women, in identification of public service needs, spatial planning and the design and provision of urban infrastructure.

88. To promote social integration, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, recognizing the importance of volunteer contributions, and in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, the cooperative sector, and public and private foundations, should:

(a) Prohibit all discriminatory exclusionary practices related to shelter, employment and access to social/cultural facilities; and

(b) Offer opportunities and physical spaces to encourage exchange among culturally diverse groups.

89. Urban poverty and unemployment represent severe constraints for human settlements development. To combat poverty, governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in partnership with all relevant actors, including workers and employers organizations, should:

(a) Take appropriate steps to stimulate productive employment opportunities for the urban poor and women in particular:

(b) Promote cost-effective, labour-intensive investments in labour-intensive methods of provision and rehabilitation of settlement infrastructure and services;

(c) Promote contracting and procurement which favours the involvement of the local private sector, including small business, and, when appropriate, the informal and the community sectors, in the provision of basic public goods and services;

(d) Promote access to credit for the poor through innovative banking alternatives;

(e) Promote and strengthen micro- and small-scale private and cooperative sector enterprises and expand markets and other employment opportunities for women, men and youth and, where appropriate, strengthen the linkages between the informal and the formal sectors;

(f) Establish and strengthen programmes designed to introduce project management skills at the community and local levels, including needs assessment, project setting and design, project implementation, impact assessment/monitoring/evaluation; and

(g) Encourage the establishment of indigenous community-based organizations, private voluntary organizations and other non-governmental organizations that contribute to efforts to reduce poverty.

90. In order to promote gender-sensitive planning and management of human settlements, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Promote the adoption of laws, by-laws, standards and norms and develop planning guidelines which take into consideration the different needs of women and men/girls and boys in the provision of and access to basic urban services, including public transport;

(b) Create representative structures, assessing gender participation and acquiring legal status for community organizations;

(c) Develop policy guidelines and programmes which encourage and actively pursue the involvement of women's groups in all aspects of community development related to environmental infrastructure and the provision of basic urban services and encourage women's own cooperatives as well as their membership in other cooperatives;

(d) Eliminate legal and customary barriers which limit women's access to land and finance;

(e) Promote equal access to all levels of education for girls and women; and

(f) Generate and disseminate gender desegregated data, ensuring that all statistics are collected, compiled, analysed and presented by age and sex; set up monitoring mechanisms in Government structures; and integrate the results into mainstream policies for sustainable human settlements development.

91. To combat violence and crime, especially at the local levels, Governments, in partnership with the community sector, should:

(a) Improve the design of urban environments to create, maintain and use open public spaces for constructive leisure so that physical spaces which lend themselves to criminal activities are minimized;

(b) Establish programmes for youth and street children in recreation, job training and counselling, which can attract private- sector investment and private-sector non-profit support;

(c) Establish programmes designed to improve local leadership skills in group facilitation, conflict resolution and intervention;

(d) Promote personal security by decentralizing police services, as appropriate, making them more accountable to the communities they serve, and by encouraging and facilitating, whenever appropriate, the formation of neighbourhood-based crime watch and crime prevention systems; and

(e) Provide accessible, affordable, impartial and humane local systems of justice by, *inter alia*, facilitating and strengthening, where appropriate, existing traditional institutions and procedures for the resolution of disputes and conflicts.

92. To protect the vulnerable, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in partnership with appropriate non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations and other voluntary groups, should:

(a) Adopt in urban areas integrated environmental, social and economic policies and programmes for distressed areas and for areas characterized by social exclusion;

(b) Support local organizations, including elder councils, women's groups, people's movements, youth groups and others based in the community, in decision-making processes concerning social welfare programmes;

(c) Support and establish operational partnerships with social welfare and community development initiatives; and

(d) Improve the design of urban environments to respond to the needs of vulnerable groups, especially the disabled.

4. Environmentally sustainable and healthy human settlements

93. The health of a population depends at least as much on the control of environmental causes of poor health as on clinical responses to disease. Measures that prevent ill health are as important as the availability of appropriate medical treatment and care. It is therefore essential to take a holistic approach to health, whereby both prevention and care are placed within the context of environmental policy, supported by effective management systems and plans of action incorporating targets that reflect local needs and capacities.

94. Health problems related to a lack of access to clean water and sanitation, inadequate waste management, poor drainage and ineffective health services exact a heavy toll on productivity and quality of life for millions of people. They may also cause social tension and inequity and increase the vulnerability of people to the effects of disasters. An integrated approach to the provision of environmentally sound infrastructure in human settlements, particularly for the rural and urban poor, is an investment in sustainable human development that can enhance the quality of life, increase productivity, reduce negative impacts on the environment, improve the overall health of a population and reduce the burden of investment in curative health and poverty alleviation.

95. Environmental risks in the home and the work place may have a disproportionate impact on women's health because of women's different susceptibility to the toxic effects of various chemicals. Many pollution-related risks to health are particularly high in urban areas, as well as in low-income areas, where there is a high concentration of polluting facilities.

Actions

96. To improve the health and well-being of all people, particularly the poor, Governments at the appropriate levels, including local authorities, and in partnership with other stakeholders, should:

(a) Develop and implement municipal and local health plans and strengthen environmental health services to prevent, mitigate and respond to diseases resulting from poor environmental conditions;

(b) Adopt measures for the prevention and control of diseases related to air, water and soil pollution and develop appropriate health care systems;

(c) Improve shelter conditions to mitigate health risks, particularly risks to women, associated with activities in the home;

(d) Build capacity at all levels for effective environmental health management; and

(e) Raise awareness of environment and health interdependencies and develop within communities the knowledge, attitudes and practices needed to improve personal and community hygiene.

97. To improve environmental conditions and reduce industrial waste and other forms of pollution in human settlements, Governments, at the appropriate levels and in partnership with all stakeholders, should:

(a) Develop and implement national and local policies and specific cross-sectoral programmes addressing all relevant chapters of Agenda 21;

(b) Develop laws and policies that specify appropriate ambient environmental quality levels and set targets for environmental improvements and dates appropriate to national and subnational priorities and conditions;

(c) Establish, equip and build capacity for monitoring and evaluating compliance with environmental regulations and effectiveness of local enforcement;

(d) Set environmental standards for the selection of technologies and their appropriate use;

(e) Provide incentives and penalties to promote the use of clean production processes and technologies which, among other things, can increase economic opportunities in the area of environmental technology and environmentally friendly products and improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of human settlements for economic investment;

(f) Provide guidelines and training for the application of procedures for assessment of environmental health impacts;

(g) Undertake environmental impact assessments for major development plans and projects;

(h) Support mechanisms for consultations and partnerships among stakeholders to prepare and implement local environmental plans and specific cross-sectoral environmental health programmes;

(i) Raise awareness of environmental issues and develop within communities the knowledge, attitudes and practices needed for sustainable human settlements development; and

(j) Establish processes to increase the exchange of information, experience and technical assistance among local authorities for environmental health improvements.

98. Recognizing the need for an integrated approach to the provision of those environmental services that are essential for human life, Governments, at the appropriate levels and in partnership with other stakeholders, should:

(a) Promote practices and consumption patterns that will conserve and protect freshwater resources;

(b) Manage demand for water in an effective manner that provides for the basic requirements of human settlements development, paying due regard to the carrying capacity of natural ecosystems;

(c) Promote environmentally compatible sanitation and treatment/disposal of waste water;

(d) Establish legal, fiscal and administrative mechanisms which ensure the integrated management of water and sanitation; and

(e) Institute mechanisms to ensure transparent and accountable management of infrastructure.

99. [In a globalizing economy, the increasing occurrence of transboundary pollution and the transfer across national borders and regions of hazardous technologies also affect seriously the environmental conditions of human settlements and health of their inhabitants. Governments should therefore develop further regional and global legal mechanisms to implement Principle 13 of the Rio Declaration regarding State and civil "liability and compensation for adverse effects of environmental damage caused by activities within their jurisdiction or control to areas beyond their jurisdiction." Such activities would include parent company decisions which lead to such adverse effects.]

5. Sustainable energy use

100. Production and consumption of energy, especially within urban agglomerations and in concentrations of industrial and other activities, represent most serious obstacles to sustainable development. Motorized transport and industrial production are major sources of air pollution. They consume non-renewable natural resources and have many irreversible effects on the basic components of the natural environment. At the same time advanced technologies as well as public awareness can enable the promotion of better practices and new ways to generate and use energy. It has been recognized that both human settlements policies and energy policies should be coordinated, especially in production, transport and household use of energy.

Actions

101. To promote sustainable energy use, Governments, at the appropriate levels and in partnership with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and consumer groups, should:

(a) Promote urban planning and design solutions incorporating rational uses of energy;

(b) Introduce energy pricing policies and regulatory measures to promote use of renewable energy and to improve efficiency of energy use in human settlements;

(c) Promote energy-efficient systems in cities, e.g. by introducing innovative energy-efficient measures in generation, distribution and use of energy, such as combined heating and cooling systems using waste heat recovery, co-generation of heating and electricity, use of renewable sources and technologies;

(d) Introduce or amend user charges and other measures to promote the rational use of household energy;

(e) Stimulate, through fiscal incentives, energy-efficient and environment friendly technologies in the rehabilitation of existing industries and services and in the building of new ones;

(f) Support programmes for reduction of emissions of polluting gases originating in energy generation, transport and use;

(g) Encourage the use of passive solar energy, ventilation and improved insulation of buildings, to reduce the consumption of energy in buildings;

(h) Encourage use of industrial and agricultural wastes and other types of low-energy and recycled building materials in construction; and

(i) Encourage and promote the dissemination of new technologies and best practices in the use of energy.

6. Sustainable transport and communications systems

102. Transport and communications systems are the key to the movement of goods, people, information and ideas, and access to markets, employment and facilities and land-use, both within cities and between cities, and in rural areas. Transport is a major consumer of non-renewable energy and land and is a major contributor to pollution, congestion and accidents. Improved transport and land-use policy and planning can reduce the ill effects of current transport systems.

103. Managing transport in our human settlements should be done in such a way as to promote good access for all to places of work, leisure and to provide goods and services for economic activities, including shopping. This should be done while reducing the negative effects of transport on the environment. Priority should be given to reducing the need to travel, through appropriate land-use patterns and public transport policies that allow for a greater proportion of journeys to be made by modes of transport which have less adverse impact on the environment, and reducing its negative effects on the human environment.

Actions

104. To achieve sustainable transport in human settlements, Governments at all levels, with other relevant stakeholders, should:

(a) Support an integrated transport policy approach which explores the full array of technical options;

(b) Encourage the spatial settlement patterns that provide for easy and local access to basic needs such work, goods, services and leisure, thereby reducing the need to travel by linking land use and transport planning;

(c) Encourage the use of optimal modal composition of transport, including walking, cycling, and public transport, through appropriate pricing, spatial settlements policies and regulatory measures;

(d) Discourage the increasing growth of car traffic and congestion which is damaging environmentally, economically and socially, and inhibits other forms of transport;

(e) Provide an effective and affordable public transport system that supports basic needs and the main traffic flows;

(f) Reduce congestion caused by motorized traffic, which is damaging to the environment, health and safety, and which inhibits the use of other modes of transport, through pricing, traffic, parking, and land-use planning and methods to ease traffic, and by providing or encouraging effective alternative means of transport, particularly to the most congested areas; and

(g) Promote, regulate, and enforce use-efficient and low-polluting technologies, including fuel-efficient engine and emissions controls and alternative fuels and energy sources.

105. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, and in partnership with the private and community sectors, should:

(a) Pursue policies to establish effective and affordable transport and communications systems which provide for easy access to basic needs such as work, goods, services and leisure;

(b) Promote, regulate and enforce the use of energy-efficient and low-polluting technologies, including fuel-efficient engine and emissions controls and alternative fuels and energy sources;

(c) Encourage the use of optimal modal composition of transport, including walking, cycling, and public transport, through appropriate pricing, spatial settlements policies and regulatory measures;

(d) Reduce congestion caused by motorized traffic, which is damaging to the environment, health and safety, and which inhibits the use of other modes of transport, through pricing, traffic, parking and land-use planning and methods to ease traffic, and by providing or encouraging effective alternative means of transport, particularly to the most congested areas; and

(e) Encourage and promote public access to electronic information services.

7. Conservation and rehabilitation of historical and cultural heritage

106. Historical places and objects of cultural and scientific, symbolic, spiritual and religious value are important manifestations of the culture of societies. Their role and importance, particularly in the light of the need for cultural identity and continuity in a rapidly changing world, need to be promoted. Buildings, spaces, places and landscapes charged with spiritual values represent an important element of stable and humane social life and community pride. Rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of the urban and architectural heritage are also in accordance with the sustainable use of natural and human-made resources.

Actions

107. To promote historical and cultural continuity, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Identify the historical and cultural importance of buildings, sites and landscapes relevant for the spiritual growth of society;

(b) Stimulate awareness in order to promote the value of conservation and the financial viability of rehabilitation;

(c) Encourage and support local cultural institutions and associations in their restoration and rehabilitation efforts; and

(d) Promote adequate financial and legal support for the effective protection of historical and cultural buildings, sites and landscapes.

108. To integrate development with conservation/rehabilitation goals, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Recognize that the historical and cultural heritage is an important economic resource;

(b) Preserve inherited historical settlement and landscape patterns, protecting the integrity of the historic urban fabric and guiding new construction in historic areas;

(c) Provide adequate legal and financial support for implementation of conservation and rehabilitation activities;

(d) Promote incentives to public and private developers for conservation and rehabilitation;

(e) Promote community-based action for conservation, rehabilitation and regeneration of neighbourhoods;

(f) Support public-private sector partnerships for inner-city and neighbourhood rehabilitation;

(g) Ensure the incorporation of environmental concerns in conservation and rehabilitation projects; and

(h) Guide transport policies to avoid environmental degradation of historic and cultural areas.

8. Improving urban economies

109. Urban settlements are integral to the process of economic transformation and development. They are a prerequisite for the creation of a diversified economic base capable of generating employment opportunities. Many new jobs will need to be created in the urban areas. Cities currently generate *at least 60 per cent of the gross national product* worldwide and, if other factors, such as population growth and migration to cities are managed efficiently, cities could develop the capacity to maintain their productivity, improve living conditions of their residents and manage natural resources in an ecologically sustainable way. Industry, together with trade and services, provides the main impetus to this process.

110. Cities have traditionally served as economic centres and have become the primary providers of services. As locomotives of economic growth and development they function within a network of supporting economic activities located in their surrounding peri-urban and rural areas. For this reason, specific actions also need to be taken to develop and maintain efficient transport, information and communications systems and linkages with other urban centres and with rural areas. Rapid changes in production technologies, trade and consumption patterns will lead to changes in urban spatial structures.

111. Economic development and service provision can be enhanced through improved human settlements activities such as urban renewal, construction of infrastructural facilities, building and civil works. These activities are also important growth factors generating employment, incomes and efficiency in other sectors of the economy. In turn, in combination with appropriate environmental protection policies, they result in a sustainable improvement of the living conditions of city residents as well as the efficiency and productivity of countries.

Actions

112. To establish an effective financial base for urban development, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, labour unions, consumer organizations business, industry, trade, and the financial sector, including the cooperatively organized business sector should:

(a) Formulate and implement fiscal policies that support sustainable development and stimulate urban employment; and

(b) Encourage the formation of new public-private sector partnerships for institutions which are privately owned and managed but public in their function and purpose.

113. To provide opportunities for productive employment and private investment, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in consultation with labour unions, chambers of commerce, industry, trade, consumer organizations, and the financial sector, including the cooperative sector, should:

(a) Implement urban development policies which take account of the needs of local enterprises;

(b) Promote appropriate allocation of sufficient serviced land for the needs of the business community;

(c) Offer opportunities for city-specific economic activities, supporting new and emerging businesses, helping small and medium-size enterprises, including the informal sector, to gain access to credit and finance, and streamlining legal and administrative procedures; and

(d) Facilitate opportunity for urban agriculture.

114. To provide opportunities for small businesses and the micro-enterprise and cooperative sectors, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in consultation with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, financial and vocational training institutions, should, as appropriate:

(a) Facilitate the extension to the informal sector of human rights protection in the field of labour, through the implementation of relevant conventions of the International Labour Organization in the areas of freedom of association, discrimination, forced labour and child labour;

(b) Facilitate the progressive extension of regulatory measures into the informal sector, guided by the conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organization;

(c) Institutionalize and strengthen programmes which integrate credit finance, vocational training and technological transfer programmes in support of small businesses and the micro-enterprise and cooperative sectors;

(d) Encourage fair treatment of the informal sector and encourage links between financial institutions and non-governmental organizations that support the informal sector where it exists; and

(e) Integrate, where appropriate, the needs of the growing informal sector within the urban planning, design and management systems, and encourage their transition to the formal sector.

115. To strengthen urban economies so that they will be more competitive in a globalizing economy, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, industry and trade, should:

(a) Promote training in information systems;

(b) Support the restructuring of local industries by improving urban infrastructure and services, ensuring a reliable energy supply and investing in telecommunications; and

(c) Encourage private-sector participation and investment to improve the quality of public goods and services.

[116. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in order to alleviate undesired impacts of structural adjustment and economic transition, should:

(a) Promote an integrated approach, addressing the social and economic consequences of reforms on human settlements development needs;

(b) Implement basic social programmes and expenditure, in particular those affecting the poor and other vulnerable segments of society, micro-enterprises and other small businesses;

(c) Design policies to promote more equitable and enhanced access to income and resources; and

(d) Support, as appropriate, public and private enterprises in their efforts to adapt to the changing requirements of technological and human resources development.]

9. Balanced development of settlements in rural areas

117. Although at the turn of the century more than half of the world's population will be living in urban areas, a substantial proportion of that population will remain in rural settlements, particularly in the developing countries. Insufficient infrastructure and services, lack of environmental friendly technology, and pollution resulting from industrialization and urbanization contribute significantly to the degradation of the rural environment. Policies and programmes for integrating rural areas into the national economy require strong local and national institutions for human settlements planning and management that place emphasis on rural-urban linkages and treat villages and cities as two ends of a human settlements continuum.

118. Active rural populations and indigenous people play an important role in ensuring food security and in sustaining social and ecological balance in a very significant portion of national territory, thus contributing to the global task of protecting fragile ecosystems.

Actions

119. To promote sustainable development of rural settlements, Governments should:

(a) Promote the active participation of isolated and remote communities in national economies and rural services centres;

(b) Take appropriate measures to improve living and working conditions in regional urban centres, small towns and rural service centres; and

(c) Provide, where appropriate, incentives for investment in rural areas.

120. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in order to promote the utilization of new and improved technologies in rural settlements development, should:

(a) Improve access to agricultural production, marketing and pricing information in remote areas by using, *inter alia*, advanced and accessible communications technology; and

(b) In cooperation with farmers' organizations, promote research and the dissemination of research in the use of traditional, new and improved technologies for agriculture, forestry and agro-forestry.

121. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in establishing policies for regional development and management, should:

(a) Establish procedures for the full participation of rural populations and indigenous communities in the setting of priorities for balanced and ecologically viable regional development;

(b) Make full use of geographical information systems and environmental assessment methods for the preparation of environmentally sound regional development policies;

(c) Implement regional and rural development plans and programmes based on needs and economic viability; and

(d) Establish a transparent system for the allocation of resources to rural areas based on economic potential and return.

122. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in strengthening development and employment opportunities in impoverished rural areas, should:

(a) Stimulate rural development by enhancing employment opportunities, providing educational and health facilities, strengthening technical infrastructure and encouraging rural enterprises and sustainable agriculture;

(b) Establish priorities for regional infrastructure investments based on opportunities for economic return, as well as on social equity concerns;

(c) Encourage the private sector to develop and strengthen contract-based wholesale markets and marketing intermediaries for rural products to improve and/or establish a cash-flow and futures contract economy in rural areas;

(d) Ensure equitable and efficient pricing and payment systems for rural products, especially of food items consumed in urban areas; and

(e) Eliminate environmentally harmful subsidies, e.g. those stimulating the excessive use of pesticides, and price control systems which perpetuate unsustainable practices and production systems in rural and agricultural economies.

123. An integrated approach is required to safeguard balanced urban-rural development. To achieve this objective, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, with the support of the relevant international and regional institutions, should:

(a) Provide an appropriate legal, fiscal and organizational framework that is tailored to strengthening the networks of small and medium-sized settlements in rural areas;

(b) Promote broad cooperation among local communities to find integrated solutions for land-use, transport and environmental problems in an urban-rural context; and

(c) Pursue a participatory approach to balanced urban-rural development, based on a continuous dialogue between the actors involved in urban-rural development.

10. Disaster prevention, preparedness and post-disaster rehabilitation capabilities

124. The impact on human settlements of natural and human-made disasters is on the increase. Besides those caused by armed conflicts, disasters are frequently caused by vulnerabilities created by human actions, such as uncontrolled or inadequately planned human settlements, lack of general infrastructure and the occupation of disaster-prone areas. The impact of such disasters and emergencies is especially severe in countries where preparedness and response capacities are ineffective in dealing with such situations.

125. The most effective and efficient systems and post-disaster response capacity are provided through volunteer contributions and local authority actions at the neighbourhood level. These can operate independently and irrespective of reduced, damaged or destroyed infrastructure or capacity elsewhere. Specific actions are required at all appropriate levels of Government, including local authorities, and in close coordination with all community groups, to put into place disaster preparedness and response capabilities which are coordinated in their planning but flexible in their implementation. The reduction of vulnerability and capacity to respond to disasters is directly related to the degree of decentralized access to information, communications, decision-making and the control of resources.

Actions

126. To improve disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, and in close consultation and cooperation with insurance companies, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, organized communities and the academic and scientific community, should:

(a) Adopt and enforce appropriate land-use, building and planning standards, norms and by-laws, based on professionally established hazard and vulnerability assessments;

(b) Encourage continued mobilization of domestic resources for disaster reduction activities;

(c) Promote and disseminate information on disaster-resistant construction methods and technologies for buildings and public works in general;

(d) Devise programmes facilitating access by all populations to less disaster-prone areas;

(e) Develop training programmes for designers, contractors and builders on disaster-resistant construction methods. Some programmes should be directed particularly to small enterprises, which build the great majority of housing and other small buildings in the developing countries; and

(f) Take measures to upgrade, where necessary, the resistance of important infrastructure, lifelines and critical facilities, in particular where damage can cause secondary disasters and/or constrain emergency relief operations.

127. In taking mitigating measures, Governments of natural disaster-prone countries, at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Establish a comprehensive information system which identifies and assesses the risks involved in disaster-prone areas and integrate it with human settlements planning and design;

(b) Promote and support low-cost, attainable solutions and innovative approaches to address critical risks of vulnerable communities, including, *inter alia*, risk mapping and community-focused vulnerability reduction programmes;

(c) Introduce a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities of and communication channels between the various key functions of disaster preparedness and prevention, including assessment, monitoring, prediction, prevention, relief, resettlement and emergency response;

(d) Promote and encourage all organized forms of civil society to participate in disaster preparedness planning in areas such as water and food storage, fuel and first-aid; and

(e) strengthen and/or develop global, regional, national and local early warning systems to alert populations to impending disasters.

128. Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, in planning and preparing for post-disaster relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and resettlement should:

(a) Establish or strengthen disaster preparedness and response systems which clearly define roles and responsibilities of and communication channels between the various functions and actors in disaster preparedness, emergency management, relief and rehabilitation;

(b) Devise drill exercise programmes for emergency response and relief; promote research on the technical, social and economic aspects of post-disaster reconstruction and adopt effective strategies and guidelines for post-disaster reconstruction;

(c) Establish reliable communications, response and decision-making capabilities, including at the local and community levels;

(d) Establish contingency plans, management and fund mobilization systems and special credit arrangements for rehabilitation, reconstruction and resettlement;

(e) Strengthen scientific and engineering capacities for damage assessment, monitoring and for special rehabilitation and reconstruction techniques;

(f) Support all relevant stakeholders in carrying out relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction activities; and

(g) Identify and support approaches to cope with the urgent shelter requirements of returnees and internally displaced persons.

D. Capacity-building and institutional development

1. Introduction

129. Economically buoyant, socially vibrant and environmentally sound human settlements under conditions of continuing and rapid urbanization will increasingly depend on the capacity of all levels of Government to reflect the priorities of communities, encouraging and guiding local development and forging partnerships between the private, public and community sectors. This can only be achieved through the effective decentralization of responsibilities and commensurate resources to key actors that are closest and most representative of their constituencies, setting into motion a strategic and participatory urban management process rooted in a shared vision. This process of decentralization and the envisaged urban management process will place great demands on institutions, particularly in developing countries and economies in transition. Capacity-building is thus to be directed at supporting decentralization and the participatory urban management process.

130. An enabling strategy, capacity-building and institutional development should aim at empowering all key actors, particularly local authorities, the private sector, the cooperative sector, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, to enable them to play an effective role in human settlements planning and management. Concerted efforts in human resources and leadership development, institutional reform, organizational and management development and continuous training and re-tooling are necessary at all levels. This can best be achieved by national and international local authority associations/networks and by other national and subnational

capacity-building institutions, although they themselves may first require strengthening. In developing countries and economies in transition, Governments should accord a high priority to implementing a comprehensive policy for capacity-building. UNCHS (Habitat) and other relevant United Nations agencies and international financial and other organizations should help them to develop their capacity, identify and assess their institution-building priorities and strengthen their management capacity.

2. Decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and their associations/networks

Actions

131. To ensure effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and their associations/networks, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Adopt and adapt, as appropriate, policies and legal frameworks from other Member States that are effectively implementing decentralization;

(b) Review and revise, as appropriate, legislation to increase local autonomy in decision-making, implementation, and resource mobilization and use, especially with respect to human, technical and financial resources and local enterprise development, within the overall framework of national, social, economic and environmental strategy;

(c) Support local authorities reviewing revenue generating mechanisms;

(d) Facilitate the exchange of technology, experience and management expertise between local authorities in the delivery of services, expenditure control, resource mobilization, partnership-building and local enterprise development, *inter alia*, through technical twinning and exchange of experience programmes;

(e) Enhance the performance of local authorities by undertaking comparative analysis of, and disseminating innovative practices in, the delivery, operation and maintenance of public goods and services and in exploiting the fiscal potential of their cities;

(f) Help institutionalize broad-based participation in decision-making and management processes at the local level;

(g) Strengthen the capacity of local authorities to engage the local private and community sectors in goal-setting and establishing local priorities and environmentally sound standards for infrastructure development and services delivery, and local economic development;

(h) Promote policy dialogue between all levels of Government, the private and community sectors to improve planning and coordination;

(i) Collect, analyse and disseminate, as appropriate, comparative data on the performance of local authorities in providing for the needs of their citizens;

(j) Reinforce measures to eradicate corruption and ensure greater transparency, efficiency and community participation in the management of local resources;

(k) Enable local authorities and their associations/networks to take initiatives in national and international cooperation, particularly to share good practice and innovative approaches to sustainable human settlements management; and

(l) Develop, in cooperation with UNCHS (Habitat), associations/networks of local authorities and other international associations and organizations, a global and easily accessible information network to facilitate the exchange of experience, know-how and expertise.

3. Participation, civic engagement and Government responsibility

132. Sustainable human settlements development requires the active engagement of civil society organizations, as well as the broad-based participation of all people. It equally requires responsive, transparent and accountable governmental structures at all levels. Civic engagement and responsible government both necessitate the strengthening of participatory mechanisms, including access to justice and community-based action planning, which will ensure that

all voices are heard in identifying problems and priorities, setting goals, exercising legal rights, determining service standards, mobilizing resources and implementing policies, programmes and projects.

Actions

133. To encourage and support participation, civic engagement and the fulfilment of governmental responsibilities, national Governments, local authorities and/or civil society organizations, as appropriate, should put into effect institutional and legal frameworks which facilitate and enable broad-based participation of all citizens in decision-making, implementation and monitoring of human settlements strategies, policies and programmes; these institutional and legal frameworks would be specifically aimed at, *inter alia*:

(a) Protecting the basic right to hold and express opinions and to disseminate ideas and information;

(b) Facilitating the formation of independent non-governmental local, national and international organizations;

(c) Providing full, timely and comprehensible information, without undue financial burden to the applicant;

(d) Undertaking civic education programmes, using all forms of media, education and information campaigns, to promote civic spirit, the awareness of civil rights and responsibilities and means of exercising them, and of sustainable economic development and the quality of life;

(e) Establishing regular and broad-based consultative mechanisms for involving civil society in decision-making;

(f) Establishing agenda-setting participatory mechanisms enabling citizens, communities and civil society organizations to play a pro-active role in identifying and formulating new policies, plans and projects;

(g) Fostering an understanding of contractual relationships with the private and non-governmental organizations' sectors to acquire the skills for negotiating effective partnerships for project implementation, development and management that will maximize benefits to all citizens;

(h) Promoting equality and equity, incorporating gender considerations and involving vulnerable and low-income groups through institutional measures to ensure their interests are represented in policy and decision-making processes, and through such techniques as advocacy training and seminars, including the development of mediation and consensus-building skills to facilitate effective networking and alliance formation;

(i) Improving access to judicial and administrative channels for affected groups to challenge, or seek redress from socially and environmentally harmful decisions and actions; including legal mechanisms to ensure that State bodies remain accountable for their actions, in accordance with their social and environmental obligations as defined in national legislation;

(j) Facilitating access to legal services by low-income groups through provision of facilities such as legal aid and free legal advice centres;

(k) Strengthening the capacity of local authorities and civil society organizations to review social, economic and environmental policies affecting their communities and to set local priorities and contribute to the setting of local standards for services in such areas as basic education, public health, public safety, drug-abuse awareness and environmental management; and

(l) Using new information technologies to promote the exchange of information, experiences and practices among citizens, groups of key actors and decision-makers.

134. Human settlements managers need to draw on the skills and resources of a diversity of people and institutions at many levels. Scarcity of suitably qualified personnel and weakness of institutional systems and technical capacity are among the main obstacles to the improvement of human settlements in many countries. In addition, the use of new skills, know-how and technology in all aspects of human settlements planning and management will be necessary. In countries where change is rapid there is a need for governments and the international community to ensure the effective development and transfer of leadership skills, management expertise, know-how and technology.

Actions

135. To improve human settlements management, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities and their associations, should:

(a) Support training programmes for administrators and civic officials at all levels, as appropriate, to enhance leadership qualities;

(b) Establish private-public, community sector, business and economic forums to facilitate the transfer of management know-how and experience;

(c) Develop and implement comprehensive training, education and human resources development policies and programmes involving a wide range of local authority associations, academic, research, training and educational institutions and the private sector focusing on:

(i) The development of a multi-sectoral approach to human settlements development;

(ii) The training of trainers to develop a core capacity for institution-strengthening and capacity-building;

(iii) The development of local capacity to define needs and undertake or commission applied research, particularly in social and environmental impact assessments, local economic growth and job creation, and to incorporate the findings in management systems;

(d) Develop information systems for the exchange, transfer and sharing of experience, expertise, know-how and technology in human settlements management;

(e) Encourage, as appropriate, the involvement of private-sector entities in improving public-sector management and administration and the formation of entities that are public in their function, private in their management and publicly-privately funded; and

(f) Develop programmes in conflict resolution.

4. Metropolitan planning and management

136. Although the managers of human settlements face many common challenges, those responsible for the management and development of metropolitan areas and mega-cities face unique problems caused by the size and complexity of their tasks and responsibilities. Among the characteristics of metropolitan areas that require special skills are increasing global competitiveness; their ethnically and culturally diverse populations; large concentrations of urban poverty; extensive infrastructure networks and transport and communications systems; their strategic role in national, regional and international production and consumption cycles, economic development, trade and finance; and their potential for severe environmental degradation. Large metropolitan areas and mega-cities also represent the largest potential risks of human, material and production-capacity loss in case of natural and human-made disasters. In some countries, the lack of a metropolitan-wide authority creates difficulty in urban management.

Actions

137. To address the special needs of metropolitan areas, Governments at all the appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Promote metropolitan-wide planning and management strategies;

(b) Monitor and analyse the effectiveness and efficiency of metropolitan structures and administrative systems, and incorporate the results into public policy for dealing with macroeconomic, social and environmental issues;

(c) Create a legislative framework and adopt organizational structures that ensure coordinated and efficient service delivery, resource mobilization and sustainable development throughout metropolitan areas;

(d) Strengthen the capacity and mandates of metropolitan authorities to deal effectively with issues of regional and national importance, such as land, energy and water resources management, environmental management, transport and communications, trade and finance, and social integration;

(e) Develop, or where necessary, create a core of professional staff trained in the technical aspects of planning and development of primary infrastructure and in emergency planning;

(f) Facilitate and promote policy dialogue and the exchange of experience, expertise, know-how and technology between metropolitan authorities in such areas as transport and communications, waste management, energy conservation, social welfare and environmental management.

5. Domestic financial resources and economic instruments

138. Funds to finance shelter and settlements development mainly come from domestic sources. Additional finance is increasingly being derived from international sources for the benefit of national Governments and local authorities. The largest impact on the financial base will derive, therefore, from improvements in economic development, sound financial practice and the capacity to mobilize domestic resources, control expenditure and efficiently manage budgets.

139. Financing the future of urban development and sustaining the economic viability of cities represents a particular challenge which will require innovative systems of finance at national and local levels. Effective partnerships between the public and private sectors are needed which combine local taxes on production and consumption with fiscal incentives for investment by industry, commerce, trade and the private service sector. New forms of municipal finance are needed to meet the future needs of urban economic development and the costs of supporting infrastructure and services.

Actions

140. To strengthen the national and local economic and financial base with a view to addressing the needs of sustainable human settlements development, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should:

(a) Strengthen, as appropriate, the capacity of local authorities to attract investments;

(b) Adopt macroeconomic policies and frameworks which encourage increased domestic savings and facilitate their use in housing, basic infrastructure and settlements development;

(c) Develop efficient, equitable and buoyant sources of national and local revenues, including taxation, user charges, tariffs and betterment fees to promote national and local capacity for capital investment in housing, infrastructure and basic services; and devise, as appropriate, new financial instruments which penalize environmental damage;

(d) Enhance national and local tax collection capabilities and expenditure control;

(e) Strive for full cost recovery of urban services through user charges, while at the same time addressing the needs of the poor, *inter alia*, through pricing policies and, where appropriate, by transparent subsidies;

(f) Support local efforts to encourage voluntary private and community sector partnerships and participation in building, operating and maintaining basic infrastructure and services;

(g) Rationalize and facilitate local authorities' access to national, regional and international capital markets and specialized lending institutions, including, *inter alia*, instituting municipal credit rating and credit systems, bearing in mind the borrower's capacity to repay the debt;

(h) Facilitate the role of local authorities in forming partnerships with the private, community and cooperative sectors and institutions for local enterprise development;

(i) Institutionalize budget mechanisms, where appropriate, and accounting to enable local authorities to engage in medium- and long-term investment programmes;

(j) Establish transparent systems and procedures to ensure financial accountability;

(k) Institutionalize, where appropriate, transparent, inter-governmental transfer mechanisms that are timely, predictable and performance- and need-based; and

(l) Attract private investment to urban development.

6. Information and communications

141. Recent developments in information technology, in conjunction with the liberalization of trade and the free flow of capital on a global scale, will bring about radical changes in the roles and functions of cities, and their decision-making and resource allocation processes. Those Governments that make the necessary investments in information technology and infrastructure and enable and empower their citizens to make effective use of such technology can expect to foster tremendous productivity gains in industry, trade and commerce. This improved information technology should be appropriately and optimally utilized to preserve and share moral values and enhance and improve education, training and public awareness of the social, economic and environmental issues affecting the quality of life, and to facilitate access by all key actors and communities to the exchange of habitat practices, including those which uphold the rights of children, women and other vulnerable groups in the context of growing urbanization.

Actions

142. To improve the capacity to exploit these innovations, Governments and local authorities should:

(a) Upgrade information infrastructure and technology and encourage their use by all levels of Government, public institutions and civil society organizations;

(b) Train key actors in the use of information technology;

(c) Develop methods of sharing experiences through electronic means, such as the Internet, networks and libraries of local initiatives and the dissemination of best practices;

(d) Encourage participation of children, youth and educational institutions in the use of public libraries and communications networks;

(e) Facilitate the learning process through the dissemination of both successful and unsuccessful experiences in human settlements taken from the governmental, public, private and community sectors;

(f) Encourage policies that make information technology and services available and more accessible to the general public; and

(g) Guarantee the free flow of, and access to, information in areas of public policy, decision-making and resource allocation.

E. International cooperation and coordination

1. Introduction

143. The goal of making human settlements and communities healthy, safe, more equitable and sustainable is a direct contribution to achieving world peace, justice and stability. International cooperation takes on added significance and importance in the light of recent trends in the globalization of the world economy. Thus there is a need for specific action by the international community to explore and inspire new forms of cooperation, coordination and investment in order to contribute effectively to the improvement of human settlements.

144. Recent downward trends in official development assistance are a cause of serious concern. However, these trends are accompanied by dramatic increases in international flows of capital as well as increasing private-sector involvement in infrastructure and services development and management. This shift from aid to trade clearly points to the need for private-sector participation and involvement in the shaping of international cooperation. The international community, including multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies have an important role to play in ensuring that public-sector resources are used to stimulate private investment so as to achieve the sustainable development of human settlements.

145. Innovative frameworks for international cooperation in human settlements development and management must be developed to include the active participation of all levels of Government, the private and cooperative sectors, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, in decision-making, policy formulation and resource allocation. These frameworks should also include new and improved forms of cooperation and coordination between and among multilateral and bilateral assistance agencies including south-south and other intra-regional transfers of best practices, the continuous development of policy, planning and management tools and instruments such as the application of shelter and urban indicators, human resources development and institutional capacity-building.

2. Enabling international context[4]

[146. Economic development is intricately linked to urbanization. Human settlements are increasingly influenced by the global economy. Promotion of economic growth and sustainable development on a global scale is imperative for enabling nations to improve the living conditions in human settlements. Among several obstacles inhibiting sustainable development, we recognize the impacts of structural adjustment and economic transition that have to be corrected. On the other hand, technological changes are resulting in major changes in the structure of employment. Promoting national Governments to cope with these impacts on human settlements within the framework of enabling strategies should become the collective responsibility of the international community.

Actions

147. To enable national Governments to cope with the impacts of structural adjustment and economic transition, the international community should:

(a) Promote the establishment of an open, equitable, cooperative and mutually beneficial international economic environment;

(b) Promote enterprise development, productive investment, industrial technology transfer and expanded access to open and dynamic markets for sustainable human settlements development;

(c) Facilitate the coordination of macroeconomic policies with human settlements policies at national, regional and international levels in order to promote an economic order that is more conducive to stable and sustainable development; and

(d) Ensure that the benefits of global economic growth help improve the quality of life in human settlements.

148. More specifically, the international community should:

(a) Strengthen the capacity of nations to improve the infrastructure and services in cities to enable smooth international trade in goods and services;

(b) Mobilize national and international financial resources for shelter provision and sustainable human settlements development;

(c) Increase substantially access to international financial resources, thus enabling developing countries and countries with economies in transition to benefit from the growing international financial market in order to promote investments in shelter and infrastructure for sustainable human settlements;

(d) Promote an international finance system that is more conducive to stable and sustainable human settlement development through, *inter alia*, a higher degree of stability in financial markets, a reduction of the risk of financial crisis and lower real interest rates;

(e) Enable local authorities to link directly with the global financial markets to finance their shelter and infrastructure programmes and establish global mechanisms and instruments to facilitate risk-sharing and credit enhancement of local and national governments;

(f) Promote strategies to ensure substantial, well-directed public and private investments in construction of shelter, basic infrastructure and health and education services for sustainable development by providing appropriate technical and financial assistance; and

(g) Examine appropriate debt-equity swapping measures in favour of shelter and infrastructure development in human settlements.

3. Financial resources and economic instruments[5]

149. The demand for shelter and infrastructural services in human settlements is continuously increasing. With rapidly rising costs of shelter and urban services, communities and nations have difficulties in mobilizing adequate domestic financial resources. New and additional financial resources, to the extent possible, are important to achieving the goals of this Conference. The existing and new forms of available resources - public, private, multilateral and bilateral - need to be enhanced through appropriate mechanisms and economic instruments for human settlements development. Technical and financial cooperation is a prerequisite for the development of international cooperation and coordination at the regional level.

Actions

150. The international community, in order to reach the agreed targets of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance and 0.15 per cent of gross national product for assistance to the least developed countries, should:

(a) Strive to fulfil the agreed targets by the year 2000 and increase the share of funding for sustainable human settlements development programmes commensurate with the scope and scale of activities required to achieve the goals set at this Conference;

(b) Promote assistance for shelter and human settlement activities in favour of vulnerable groups, such as refugees and internally displaced persons, documented migrants and the homeless through specific targeted grants;

(c) Raise the priority of sustainable human settlements development among multilateral and bilateral donors and mobilize their support for national plans of action;

(d) Encourage multilateral and bilateral donors to support nations in their efforts to pursue enabling strategies through which national and local governments, communities, and the private and cooperative sectors can form partnerships to participate in shelter and human settlements activities;

(e) Provide soft loans and grants to enable all nations to specifically address the needs of vulnerable groups;

(f) Develop innovative sources of funding, both public and private, for human settlements development, and create a supportive environment for the mobilization of resources by civil society, including beneficiary and individual voluntary contributions;

(g) Support programmes that increase the effective and transparent utilization of public and private resources, reduce wasteful and untargeted expenditure and increase access to housing and services for the poor;

(h) Attract international flows of private finances for shelter provision and settlements development through appropriate economic instruments;

(i) Facilitate access to global finances for local and national governments which are initiating or involved in public-private partnership programmes;

(j) Enable the establishment of ethical codes of conduct, monitoring mechanisms, fiscal policies and other appropriate rule-making instruments for transparent, effective and sustained long-term private global investments;

(k) Support national and local government efforts to tap the global financial and capital markets;

(l) Establish and support linkages of informal credit mechanisms to the global pool of resources and increase access by a larger segment of the population to housing finance through participatory processes involving communities, non-governmental organizations, credit unions and global financial institutions; and

(m) Assist nations in implementing effective and equitable pricing mechanisms for sustainable shelter and infrastructure to induce greater flows of private, domestic and global funds, while ensuring transparent and targeted subsidies for the poor.]

4. Technology transfer and information exchange

151. The use and transfer of environmentally sound technologies which have a profound impact on consumption and production patterns is one of the prerequisites for sustainable human settlements development. Advanced and appropriate technologies and the knowledge-based systems which support their application offer new opportunities for more efficient use of human, financial and material resources, more sustainable industrial practices and new sources of employment. International agencies have an essential role in disseminating and facilitating access to information on available technologies and options for their transfer.

Actions

152. The international community, in promoting and facilitating the transfer of technology and expertise in support of the implementation of national plans of action, should:

(a) Establish and reinforce, as appropriate, global networks among all stakeholders to facilitate information exchange on environmentally sound shelter and human settlement technologies;

(b) Ensure that the process of technology transfer is fair and avoids dumping of environmentally unsound technologies on the recipients;

(c) Develop appropriate mechanisms for technology transfer, including south-south cooperation;

(d) Place special emphasis on the funding and promotion of applied research and innovation in all areas which could contribute to enhancing the capability of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to provide shelter, urban services, infrastructure and amenities to their communities; and

(e) Enhance the role of the Commission on Human Settlements and UNCHS (Habitat) to identify and disseminate new and promising technologies related to human settlements, leading to the Centre's functioning as a clearing house, especially for those technologies and methods which can lower the cost of infrastructure, make basic services more affordable and minimize detrimental environment impacts.

5. Technical cooperation

153. The implementation of an international enabling strategy based on specific capacity-building programmes will require a shift in international cooperation. To face the challenges of a rapidly urbanizing world, there is a need to ensure that international and regional networks facilitate more effectively the exchange and transfer of knowledge and experience on institutional, legal and regulatory frameworks, and to disseminate best practices on sustainable urban management. One of the central mechanisms and elements of international cooperation should continue to be UNCHS (Habitat), as an independent and neutral entity that can exercise effective leadership in technical cooperation activities. New international and regional networks may need to be created and the contribution of all relevant United Nations organizations should be welcomed.

Actions

154. More specifically, the international community should:

(a) Establish cost-effective global human settlements information networks in the form of permanent "electronic conferences" which will contain updated information on the Global Plan of Action, best practices, as well as progress reports on the implementation of national plans of action;

(b) Through global human settlements information networks, assist Governments at all levels, all major groups of actors and international development agencies, in accessing information on policies, strategies, programmes and projects on sustainable human settlements development and shelter provision;

(c) Under the leadership of the Commission on Human Settlements, and supported by the United Nations regional economic commissions and UNCHS (Habitat), develop awareness-building and information activities to ensure that human settlements development issues in general, and concerted policy and programme responses to urbanization in particular, are brought into the mainstream of the development objectives of the international community and national Governments;

(d) Develop and strengthen, with a view to supporting and facilitating national and local efforts in human settlements management, capacity-building programmes and promote exchange of experiences on policy responses to urbanization and integrated regional development, within the framework of national development strategies;

(e) Through the secretariat of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, UNCHS (Habitat), supported by the United Nations regional economic commissions with regard to information activities, develop operational activities focusing on capacity-building in order to enhance the capabilities of national and local authorities to identify and analyse critical human settlements development issues; to formulate and effectively implement policies and programmes which respond to them; and to efficiently manage the process of settlements development at the local level; and

(f) Continue to support technical cooperation programmes aimed at mitigating the effects of natural and human-made disasters, as well as reconstruction activities in affected countries.

6. Institutional cooperation

155. The task of pursuing the goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development, in the face of increasing global economic interaction, necessitates international cooperation of public and private institutions operating in the area of human settlements development, whereby resources, information and capacities are pooled for a more effective response to human settlements problems.

156. The Habitat Agenda constitutes a new framework for international cooperation. It should ensure comprehensive implementation, follow-up and assessment of the outcome of this Conference, together with the results of other recent United Nations conferences where they are related to human settlements, particularly the World Summit for Children, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights, the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the World Summit for Social Development, the International Conference on Population and Development, and the Fourth World Conference on Women. This will require better coordination and cooperation between multilateral and bilateral partners and joint programming, leading to increased and more effective cooperation between UNCHS and other entities within and outside the United Nations system.

Actions

157. The United Nations family of agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, the regional and subregional development banks and funds and bilateral support agencies should:

(a) Establish and strengthen, where appropriate, cooperative mechanisms to integrate sustainable human settlement development in their policies, programmes and operations;

(b) Establish and strengthen partnerships with international associations of local authorities and with all other stakeholders to achieve the goals of the Conference;

(c) Develop activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of local authorities

(d) Intensify their cooperation with non-governmental organizations, voluntary groups and community associations, and private and cooperative sectors in sustainable human settlements development; and

(e) Support public-private partnerships in shelter delivery, service provision and other development activities for sustainable human settlements.

F. Implementation and follow-up of the Global Plan of Action

1. Introduction

158. The long-term impact of the commitments made by Governments and the international community at Habitat II will depend on the implementation of actions agreed upon. Also, national plans of action and other relevant national programmes and actions on sustainable human settlements development and shelter provision will need to be evaluated in order to make appropriate modifications. Moreover, effective systems need to be utilized to assess progress in implementing the Global Plan of Action, with a view to encouraging Governments to sustain and improve their performances and strengthen international cooperation.

2. Tracking progress on the Global Plan of Action Plan of Action[a]

159. The United Nations Commission on Human Settlements should carry out periodic reviews to assess the integration of settlements development with broader environmental, social and economic development considerations. The first major review should take place in the year 2000 and should be discussed by the Commission at its 18th session. This activity will have the following purposes:

(a) To track the progress in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and activities related to sustainable settlements development and shelter provision, including the relevant commitments contained in Agenda 21;

(b) To receive and analyse relevant input from competent non-governmental organizations and local authorities in the context of the overall implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

(c) To provide appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council on the basis of the analysis and synthesis of the information received and to inform the Commission on Sustainable Development; and

(d) To assess the progress made towards the goals of the Habitat Agenda: *adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world*.

160. Multidisciplinary and thematic approach to research and development, focusing on the continuous monitoring and analysis of critical settlements trends and issues and of policies and programmes to respond to urbanization, will remain an important function of UNCHS (Habitat). The United Nations regional economic commissions will contribute, as appropriate, to these activities.

3. Indicators, best practices and performance evaluation

161. It is essential to evaluate the impact of policies, strategies and actions on the provision of adequate shelter and the achievement of sustainable human settlements development. The results of these evaluations will be submitted to the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, with UNCHS (Habitat) as focal point, analyser and synthesizer of information. UNCHS (Habitat), together with other relevant organizations, will establish an appropriate process for analysing and monitoring major trends of urbanization and the impact of urban policies.

162. As part of their commitment to strengthening their existing shelter- and settlements-related data collection and analysis capabilities, Governments at all appropriate levels, including local authorities, should continue to identify and disseminate best practices, develop and apply shelter and human settlements development indicators, in particular those applied in preparation for Habitat II, and submit periodical reports to UNCHS (Habitat). This and other relevant information, as appropriate, will be used by national Governments when reporting to the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements for assessing the implementation of national plans of action on a regular basis.

Notes

1/ The delegation of the United States of America considers all of the text on Principles as bracketed.

2/ Not discussed by the Informal Drafting Group because certain delegations did not have a drafting mandate.

3/ When the term "Governments" is used, it will be deemed to include the European Community, within its areas of competence.

4/ The section "Enabling international context" (paras. 146 - 148) has neither been discussed nor considered by the Informal Drafting Group at its second intersessional meeting.

5/ The section "Financial resources and economic instruments" (paras. 149 - 150) has neither been discussed nor considered by the Informal Drafting Group at its second intersessional meeting.

6/ Issues contained in a proposal regarding United Nations system monitoring and coordination were discussed, but were deferred to the third session of the Preparatory Committee.